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Lilies and Violets

FOR

Easter Day.

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FOR

EASTER DAY.

BY

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EASTER DAY.

O SAD, sad soul, fling wide your doors,
And make your windows curtainless!
Strew odours on your silent floors,
And all your walls with lilies dress!

Throw open every sombre place;
Roll every hindering stone away!
Let Easter sunshine gild your face,
And bless you with its warmth to-day!

Let friends renew each by-gone hour,
Let children fling the world a kiss:
And every hand tie in some flower,
To crown a day so good as this!

And whether skies are sad or clear,
We'll give the day to joy and song:
For since the Christ is surely here,
All things are right, and naught is wrong!

O BELLS IN THE STEEPLE.

O BELLS in the steeple,
Ring out to all people
That Christ has arisen, that Jesus is here!
Touch heaven's blue ceiling
With your happy pealing,
O bells in the steeple, ring out full and clear!

O soft April showers,
Call out the young flowers,
Touch each little sleeper, and bid her obey!
Set daffodils blowing,
And fresh grasses growing,
To thrill the old world on this new Easter-day!

O lilies so stately,
Like maids tall and shapely,
Christ loved you, and talked of your beauty of old!
Stand up in your places,
And bend your white faces,
While swinging before Him your censers of gold!

O violets tender,
Your shy tribute render!
Tie round your wet faces your soft hoods of blue;
And carry your sweetness,
Your dainty completeness,
To some tired hand that is longing for you.

O velvet-bloomed willows,
Go comfort sick pillows
With visions of meadow-lands, peaceful and brown!
The breath of Spring lingers
Within your cold fingers,
And the brook's song is caught in your fringes of down.

O world, bowed and broken
With anguish unspoken,
Take heart and be glad, for the Lord is not dead!
On some bright to-morrow,
Your black cloud of sorrow
Will break in a sweet rain of joy on your head!

O bells in the steeple,
Ring out to all people,
That Christ has arisen, that Jesus is here!
Touch heaven's blue ceiling
With your happy pealing;
O bells in the steeple, ring out full and clear!

SOME VIOLETS.

DEAR friend, I give thee violets;
And for my fee,
The fragrant secret of thy life
Disclose to me.

For through it, like a guiding thread,
I scent the rue;
And faintly track the odorous feet
Of heart's-ease too.

Reach down on patient cords to me
Thy brimming cup
Of wise, sweet thoughts, that I may drink,
And thus toil up

To where thou art, so meekly high,
So far away.
I can but kiss my eager hands
To thee to-day.

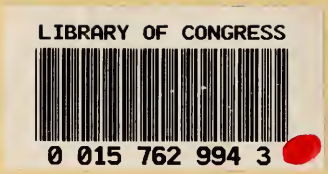
Or, if I may not reach so high,
Then be it so;
If I may sit beside thy feet,
'Twill not be low.

And, listening soft, my soul may catch,
In some far sense,
The tuneful impulse of a life
Serene, intense.

Ah, me! I do but spoil my work
With clumsy phrase;
And mar, with my uncultured speech,
Where I would praise.

So I will lay my heart's-ease down
At thy kind feet;
Regretting sore their broken stems,
Their vanished sweet.

Yet praying that their faded blue
Some type may be
Of the fair badge my heart shall wear
Always for thee!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